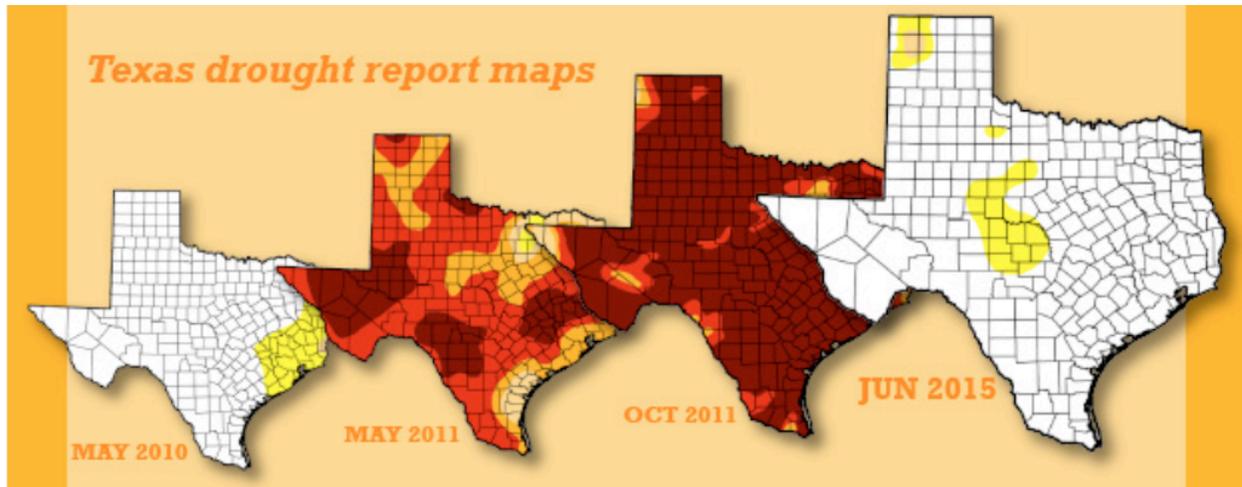


The next DROUGHT may have already begun



July 2015 – Texas Water Development Board & The Lower Trinity Groundwater Conservation District

Drought is coming. Based on our history, Texans can be sure of it. Texas has experienced a drought in every decade of the 20th century and research tells us that decade-long droughts have occurred in Texas since the 1500s. The recent rainfall in Texas is not a return to normalcy — it is a luxury, and we must take advantage of every drop.

In May of 2010, Texas' drought map looked much like it does today — an almost colorless map with sparse areas of abnormally dry conditions. A year later, in May 2011, a map smothered in shades of red painted a much different picture; more than two-thirds of the state was engulfed in some stage of drought.

Less than six months later, in October of 2011, the map looked as though the entire state was on fire. Texas had been gripped by the most severe stage of drought, and it was only the beginning.

Texans didn't know in May of 2010 that the second-worst drought in Texas' recorded history was about to settle in. But a major wake-up call came in the form of wildfires, water shortages, and economic losses across the state, and policies were put in place to help improve our water infrastructure with affordable financing options for sustainable water projects.

In the past five years, Texans have proved they can make individual, sustainable lifestyle changes to conserve water. Lawns can be watered less, shower times can be cut, and faucets can be turned off when we brush our teeth.

While we cannot predict the next drought, we must work vigilantly to prepare for it. We must not abandon what we've learned and achieved in water conservation these past few years. Heavy rainfall is not synonymous with an adequate or long-lasting water supply. To ensure we have enough water to support the more than 1,000 people moving to Texas each day, we must maximize the use of the water we have now — because there is no guarantee it will rain tomorrow.

Texas communities have already taken the lead on innovative water projects like aquifer storage and recovery, reuse, and brackish desalination. Let's boost those efforts by practicing daily conservation in our homes, at our businesses, and on our land.

For more information on water conservation efforts in Polk and San Jacinto counties, visit the **Lower Trinity Groundwater Conservation District** website at www.LTGCD.org.